

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 MCE-00 ACDA-12 DOE-15 SOE-02
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 TRSY-02 IO-13
EB-08 NRC-05 OES-07 CEQ-01 /141 W
-----082457 290342Z /70

R 271500Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5237
INFO AMEMBASST TEHRAN
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 1094

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, MARR,CZ, IR
SUBJECT: IRANIAN GOVERNMENT TO OBTAIN CZECHOSLOVAK "MISSILES"

REF PRAGUE A-14 (NOTAL)

1. AMBASSADOR BYRNE WAS TOLD BY THE NEW IRANIAN AMBASSADOR NASSEREDDIN MIRFAKHRAI, ON 21 APRIL 1978, THAT THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT HAS ALL BUT MADE A DEAL WITH THE CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT INVOLVING "MISSILE LAUNCHERS" AND PETROLEUM PRODUCTS. GOC APPEARS ENTHUSIASTIC AND ANXIOUS TO MOVE AHEAD BUT STILL NEEDS A "FINAL CLEARANCE". AMBASSADOR MIRFAKHRAI UNDERSTOOD CZECHOSLOVAKS TO SAY THEY REQUIRE A WARSAW PACT GO-AHEAD, BUT HE INTERPRETS THIS TO MEAN SIMPLY THAT SOVIETS MUST APPROVE THE DEAL. THE WEAPONS THAT THE GOI IS OBTAINING ARE PROBABLY THE CZECHOSLOVAK DESIGNED AND PRODUCED MULTIPLE ROCKET LAUNCHERS, DESIGNATED THE RM-70.

2. THE RM-70 IS CONSIDERED AN OUTSTANDING WARSAW PACT ARTILLERY WEAPONS SYSTEM, USING THE TATRA-813 VEHICLE AS THE MOBILE LAUNCHING PLATFORM. IN AUGUST 1977 THE SHAH VISITED CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND WAS TREATED
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TO A FIRE-POWERED DEMONSTRATION BY THE CZECHOSLOVAK ARMED FORCES. IT WAS PROBABLY AT THAT TIME THAT A DECISION WAS MADE IN PRINCIPLE TO OBTAIN THE RM-70 MULTIPLE-ROCKET LAUNCHER, WITH DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS CONCLUDED DURING GENERAL TOUFANIAN'S VISIT TO PRAGUE IN EARLY APRIL. (TEHRAN DAO 11R 68460207 78). THE LAUNCHER SYSTEM IS AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE SOVIET SYSTEMS WHICH WE BELIEVE THE IRANIANS ALREADY HAVE, SINCE IT INCLUDES PROVISIONS FOR

IMMEDIATE RELOADING OF THE LAUNCHER TUBES.

3. COMMENT: WE CANNOT YET EVALUATE AMBASSADOR MIRFAKHRAI AS A SOURCE. THE GOC IS KNOWN, HOWEVER, TO NEED NON-SOVIET SUPPLIES OF OIL FOR WHICH IT WOULD LIKE TO BARTER ITS ARMS OR OTHER INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS.
BYRNE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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